

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, UR SREF US IS PFOR OREP

SUBJECT: SOVIET EMIGRATION TO US AND ISRAEL: CALL ON ALL-UNION

REF: STATE 177252

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THROUGH GOOD OFFICES OF MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION, MEETING OF SENATOR HARTKE AIDES DR. JACQUES LEROY AND LEON CHARNEY AND EMBASSY CONSOFFS WITH ALL-UNION OVIR DIRECTOR ANDREI VEREIN WAS ARRANGED ON SHORT NOTICE SEPTEMBER 25 AT MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HEADQUARTERS. HARTKE AIDES REQUESTED EMBASSY ARRANGE MEETING TO DISCUSS WITH COMPETENT SOVIET OFFICIALS QUESTION OF SOVIET EMIGRATION TO US AND ISRAEL. ALL-UNION OVIR DEPUTY DIRECTOR OVCHINNIKOV AND MINISTRY INTERPRETER ALSO ATTENDED. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING WELCOMING REMARKS BY VEREIN, DR. LEROY EXPRESSED GRATITUDE ON BEHALF SENATOR HARTKE, CHARNEY AND HIMSELF FOR APPOINTMENT AND RECALLED TO SOVIET OFFICIALS HARTKE SPRING VISIT TO USSR WITH OTHER MEMBERS SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE. LEROY THEN OPENED SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WITH BRIEF EXPLANATION OF ROLE WHICH FREE IMMIGRATION PLAYED IN US DEVELOPMENT AND IMPORTANCE WHICH AMERICANS CONTINUE TO ATTACH TO THIS ISSUE. REMINDING SOVIET OFFICIALS OF PRESENTATION TO SOV GOVT OF REPRESENTATION

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LIST XV CONTAINING US-SOVIET FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES, LEROY

STATED THAT MEMBERS OF BOTH US CONGRESS AND PUBLIC HIGHLY DIS-
APPOINTED OVER FACT THAT ONLY A SMALL MINORITY (ABOUT 14 PERCENT)
OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE USSR ON THIS LIST HAVE RECEIVED TO DATE

REQUISITE SOVIET EXIT PERMISSION TO JOIN THEIR FAMILIES IN
US. LEROY EMPHASIZED THAT SOME OF SOVIET RESIDENTS ON LIST WERE
US CITIZENS.

3. VEREIN BEGAIN HIS REPLY BY SAYING THAT UNTIL SECRETARY-GENERAL
BREZHNEV VISITED US IN JUNE, "DISTORTED" INFORMATION ABOUT
SOVIET EMIGRATION POLICY EVIDENTLY CIRCULATED IN US. FOR EXAMPLE,
REPORTS THAT TENS OF THOUSANDS WISH TO EMIGRATE FROM SOVIET UNION
ARE GROUNDLESS. IN FACT, AS SECRETARY-GENERAL POINTED OUT, 97
PERCENT OF THOSE WHO DO APPLY RECEIVE PERMISSION. VEREIN THEN
PICKED UP UPDATED COPY OF USG REP LIST XV, WHICH LEROY ASKED CONSOFFS
TO HAND OVER DURING HIS OPENING REMARKS, AND BEGAN TO RECITE
FIGURES APPROXIMATING THOSE PROVIDED BY BREZHNEV DURING HIS JUNE
MEETING WITH SENATORS. VEREIN SAID THAT OVER 200 "ON YOUR LIST"
RECEIVED PERMISSION, ALMOST TWO HUNDRED HAD NOT APPLIED AT ALL
AND HAD NO INTEREST IN LEAVING SOVIET UNION, SOME HAD DIED, ETC.

4. ASKED WHAT LIST VEREIN WAS REFERRING TO, HE STATED ONE GIVEN
BY DR. KISSINGER. VEREIN COMPLAINED THAT ONLY MINORITY ON
THIS AND UNSPECIFIED "OTHER" LISTS WERE ACTIVE CASES IN WHICH
SOVIET CITIZENS ACTUALLY SOUGHT TO EMIGRATE. HE COMPLAINED
THAT SOME "PERSONS ABROAD" WERE MAKING " A LOT OF NOISE ABOUT
NOTHING" IN VIEW OF "FACT THAT 97 PERCENT OF APPLI-
CANTS" HAVE RECEIVED SOVIET EXIT PERMISSION.

5. CONSOFFS ENTERED DISCUSSION AT THIS POINT TO EXPRESS
PLEASURE AT BEING RECEIVED BY SOVIET OFFICIALS WHO EXERCISE
CRUCIAL ROLE IN IMPORTANT AREA OF HUMAN RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR
TWO COUNTRIES. CONSOFFS THEN POINTED OUT FOLLOWING CO IERNING
USG REPRESENTATION LIST: A) SUCH LISTS REPRESENT EXCLUSIVELY
US-SOVIET FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES AND THEY HAVE BEEN
TRANSMITTED ON REGULAR BASIS TO SOVIET GOVERNMENT SINCE PRESEN-
TATION OF FIRST LIST IN CONNECTION WITH USSR VISIT OF THEN VICE
PRESIDENT NIXON IN 1959; B) MOST RECENT LIST, NUMBER XV, WAS
PRESENTED BY CHARGE DUBS TO FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
KUZNETSOV MAY 16 AND IN SLIGHTLY REVISED FORM (CASES HAVING
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RECEIVED EXIT PERMISSION ELIMINATED) BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
STOESSEL TO AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN JUNE 8; C) STATISTICS CITED BY
MR. VEREIN CANNOT POSSIBLY REFER TO THIS LIST, AS ONLY 14
PERCENT OF THESE US CASES HAVE RECEIVED SOVIET EXIT PERMISSION
AND MANY PERSONS ON LIST HAVE BEEN REFUSED SEVERAL TIMES; D)
USG LIST WAS CAREFULLY SCREENED IN ORDER TO INCLUDE ONLY ACTIVE
CASES; AND E) TO KNOWLEDGE OF EMBASSY, VERY FEW IF ANY INDIVIDUALS
ON USG LIST HAVE EMPLOYMENT IN USSR WHICH COULD BE CONSIDRED

AS TOUCHING UPON SOVIET "STATE SECURITY," AS VIRTUALLY EVERY CASE ON LIST HAS LONG HAD CLOSE RELATIVES IN US. CONSOFFS ALSO POINTED OUT MODEST SIZE OF USG LIST. WHICH CONTAINS ABOUT 230 CASES AND 660 INDIVIDUALS, AND FACT THAT IT INCLUDES NAMES OF SPOUSES LONG SEPARATED.

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6. VEREIN SCANNED COPY US LIST AND TOOK NOTES AS CONSOFFS SPOKE. THEY EXPLAINED THAT ALL CASES HAVING RECEIVED SOVIET EXIT PERMISSION AS OF SEPT 25 HAD BEEN CROSSED OUT ON LIST HANDED TO HIM, AND SPECIAL NOTATIONS WERE MADE INDICATING WHICH PERSONS ON LIST WERE CONSIDERED UNDER US LAWS TO BE AMERICAN CITIZENS (FYI: EIGHT HAVE BEEN SO IDENTIFIED BY DEPT TO DATE). VEREIN FINALLY ASKED: "SO, THIS IS PURELY AN AMERICAN LIST?" CONSOFFS CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS CASE, AND VEREIN REPLIED THAT LIST WILL RECEIVE "SERIOUS CONSIDERATION."

7. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF USG LIST, MR. CHARNEY MADE BRIEF STATEMENT TO SOVIET OFFICIALS CONCERNING INTENSE INTEREST IN US ON QUESTION OF SOVIET EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL. HE POINTED OUT THAT HE HIMSELF IS JEWISH, AND STATED THAT ONE OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES IS TO SERVE AS SENATOR HARTKE'S LIAISON WITH THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY. CHARNEY SAID BOTH SENATOR HARTKE AND HE HAVE DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO SUPPORT GRANTING OF MFN TREATMENT TO USSR BUT HE ADDED THAT AS SOVIET OFFICIALS UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE,

SERIOUS POLITICAL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED IN THIS AREA. CHARNEY STATED THAT HE WOULD BE MOST APPRECIATIVE IF HE COULD TRANSMIT TO SENATOR HARTKE AND HIS JEWISH COMMUNITY CONTACTS SOME INDICATION FROM SUCH AUTHORITY THAT PROGRESS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING

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ON HARD-CORE REFUSAL CASES OF INTENDED EMIGRANTS TO ISRAEL.

8. VEREIN REPLIED THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES AWARE AND APPRECIATIVE OF SENATOR HARTKE'S POSITION IN FAVOR OF MFN TREATMENT FOR USSR. HE THEN REPEATED HIS CLAIM THAT 97 PERCENT OF EXIT VISA APPLICATIONS ARE SUCCESSFUL, AND HE DREW ANALOGY THAT CONCERN ABROAD OVER UNRESOLVED CASES IS "LIKE TURNING A BOTTLE UPSIDE-DOWN--ONCE THE BULK HAS POURED OUT, THOSE LAST FEW DROPS APPEAR TO COME VERY SLOWLY." HE INDICATED THAT ALL SUCH CASES WILL BE "CONSIDERED." CHARNEY REPLIED BY EXPRESSING APPRECIATION THAT RENEWED CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN THESE CASES, AND HE ADDED THAT SENATOR HARTKE AND HIS CONTACTS IN AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY "WILL BE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT THE LAST DROPS ARE COMING." ALTHOUGH THE MINISTRY INTERPRETER DID NOT TRANSLATE THIS LAST PHRASE, VEREIN (WHO HAS SERVED IN WASHINGTON) APPEARED TO UNDERSTAND. DISCUSSION CONCLUDED ON THIS SEEMINGLY PROMISING NOTE, WITH VEREIN EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH THE MEETING.

9. COMMENT: IN EMBASSY VIEW, SUCCESS IN ARRANGING HIGHEST LEVEL OVERSIGHT MEETING ON SHORT NOTICE (FIVE HOURS) APPEARS TO INDICATE SENSITIVITY OF SOVIET OFFICIALS TO NEED TO PRESENT POSITIVE FRONT AT THIS TIME ON EMIGRATION ISSUE. LEROY AND CHARNEY VISIT THEREFORE PRODUCTIVE IN ITS OWN RIGHT IN PROVIDING FOR SUCH A GIVE-AND-TAKE WITH THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE SOVIET OFFICIALS IN EXTREMELY SENSITIVE AREA. ONLY TIME WILL TELL, HOWEVER, WHETHER EITHER THE USG REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL OR THE ISRAELI HARD-CORE REFUSAL CASES WILL RECEIVE THE "SERIOUS CONSIDERATION" PROMISED IN THIS AND OFTEN HEARD IN OTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS. LEROY AND CHARNEY INDICATED TO CONSOFFS, HOWEVER, THAT SENATOR HARTKE PLANS TO FOLLOW UP ON BOTH US AND ISRAELI CASES WITH AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN. PERHAPS PARALLELED EFFORTS IN THIS AREA BY BOTH CONGRESSIONAL AND HIGH LEVEL USG REPRESENTATIVES WILL INDEED SUCCEED IN BRINGING ABOUT PROGRESS ON BOTH US AND ISRAELI EMIGRATION FRONTS AT THIS CLEARLY OPPORTUNE MOMENT. FYI: THIS MESSAGE HAS NOT BEEN CLEARED BY LEROY AND CHARNEY, WHO DEPARTED MOSCOW

SEPTEMBER 25.

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